



Item Number: 1

City Council / Board of Directors

Public Hearing(s)

Meeting of: May 2, 2023

Submitted By:

Brian Gengler, City Engineer

Subject:

Approve three state funded projects in Cycle 11 of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Notices of Exemptions

Recommendation:

That the Honorable City Council:

1. Open and conduct a public hearing, receive testimony regarding the proposed projects; and
2. Approve the following projects and respective notices of exemptions:
Traffic Signal Installation at Village Drive and Puesta Del Sol Drive Project,
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon Installation Project, and
Retroreflective Borders for Backplates of 96 Traffic Signals.

Fiscal Impact:

This action will not result in a fiscal impact. The grant funds for each project will be included in the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget.

Strategic Plan Goal:

This project aligns with Goal E, Strategy 1 in the City of Victorville Strategic Plan 2020-2023, "Invest in Infrastructure" and "Implement the City's Capital Improvement Program to meet community needs" as the traffic improvements will improve safety for pedestrians and drivers throughout the City.

Background:

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), administered by Caltrans, provides grant funding for traffic safety improvement projects. The focus of the HSIP is on infrastructure projects with nationally recognized crash reduction factors. HSIP projects must be identified on the basis of crash experience (traffic accidents), crash potential, crash rate, or other data supported means.

The City has received grant funding for several HSIP projects in the past, including:

- Guardrail replacements at 13 locations.
- A new traffic signal at Village Dr. / Tawney Ridge Lane.
- A new traffic signal at Mojave Dr. / Condor Dr.
- Upgrades to traffic signals at five intersections on Seventh St.

In September of 2022 City staff submitted applications to Caltrans for four projects for the Cycle 11 HSIP call for projects. On March 9, 2023, Caltrans notified the City that three projects were approved for HSIP grant funding and the required minimum match amounts as shown below.

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|--|--------------|
| • A new traffic signal at Village Dr. / Puesta Del Sol Dr. | \$526,500.00 |
| Minimum required match: | \$98,500.00 |
| • Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons at 9 school crosswalks | \$149,310.00 |
| Minimum required match: | \$0.00 |
| • Retroreflective Borders for Backplates of 96 Traffic Signals | \$110,440.00 |
| Minimum required match: | \$0.00 |

Please refer to Attachment A, location maps for the projects and Attachment B, the Caltrans notice of funding for the projects. One of the projects, a new traffic signal at Village Dr. / Clovis Rd., with a grant request of \$576,000.00 was not approved for funding.

Discussion:

The next step needed to move the three funded HSIP projects forward is to approve each project in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines. Caltrans requires CEQA approval before the funds are authorized for construction. This authorization is required before each project can be advertised for construction.

CEQA requires that public agencies review all projects to consider their potential direct or indirect environmental impacts on the environment and to establish whether such impacts can be reduced or avoided through mitigation or by pursuing other alternatives. The California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3 provides guidelines for implementation of CEQA. Article 5 of such guidelines identifies certain types of projects which have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and which shall be exempt from the provisions of CEQA. Pursuant to Article 5, Section 15061, after determining that a project is exempt from CEQA, and once the project is approved by its governing body, a Notice of Exemption may be recorded to initiate a 35-day statute of limitations for any appeals submitted from a party feeling a categorical exemption is being improperly used to limit the possibility of legal challenge.

The scope of each project is as follows:

1. Installation of Traffic Signal at Village Drive and Puesta del Sol Project

This project will install a traffic signal to upgrade the intersection at Village Drive and Puesta Del Sol Drive from a 2-way stop to an actuated traffic signal to improve overall

safety of the intersection. This signal will be installed at an intersection with existing ADA ramps, conduits, and sidewalks.

2. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons Project

This project consists of installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons at 9 existing uncontrolled crosswalks located at or next to schools.

3. Retroreflective Borders to Traffic Signal Backplates

This project will retrofit the backplates of all 96 city-owned traffic signals. The back plate which is located behind the red, yellow, and green lights on a traffic signal will be retrofitted by installing yellow retroreflective borders to improve visibility.

Pursuant to CEQA requirements described in the background section of this report, City staff has evaluated the scopes of these three projects and has determined that they are all Categorically Exempt from CEQA under Article 19, Section 15301(c): Existing Facilities (Class 1) of the CEQA guidelines. This determination was based on the following criteria:

- All three projects are considered minor alterations that will involve no expansion of existing use/capacity as their scopes aim to improve the safety of existing streets by adding elements to existing infrastructure.
- None of the following exceptions considered under Section 15300.2 apply:
 - a) Location: The proposed project elements will be installed within the existing City's right of way within no particularly sensitive environments.
 - b) Cumulative Impact: All three projects will be fully functional upon completion and will not require any successive projects for which cumulative impacts must be considered.
 - c) Significant Effect: Even under unusual circumstances there is no reasonable possibility that the activities to be performed to complete these projects will have a significant effect on the environment.
 - d) Scenic Highways: None of the projects are located within scenic highways.
 - e) Hazardous Waste Sites: None of the projects are listed on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
 - f) Historical Resources: None of the projects will affect any historical resources as they will be installed within existing streets.

Please refer to Attachment C, the Notice of Exemption forms for each project.

Engineering staff will be preparing the plans, specifications and estimates for the three projects discussed above. After Caltrans authorizes the funds for construction, staff will advertise for bids. Next, after bids have been opened for the new traffic signal at Village Dr. / Puesta Del Sol Dr. and the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons Project, staff will request that City Council award construction contracts to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for each project. For the Retroreflective Borders to Traffic Signal Backplates Project, staff will proceed with a purchase within the City Manager's authority,

assuming the total amount does not exceed \$125,000.00. The materials purchased for this project will be installed by City traffic signal maintenance staff.

Staff recommends that the Honorable City Council open and conduct a public hearing to receive testimony regarding the proposed projects and approve the following projects and respective notices of exemption:

1. Traffic Signal Installation at Village Drive and Puesta Del Sol Drive Project;
2. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon Installation Project; and
3. Retroreflective Borders for Backplates of 96 Traffic Signals.

Staff remains available for any questions Council may have.

Attachments: A. Location Maps
 B. Notice of Funding
 C. Notices of Exemption